



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Office of the Secretary

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**INTERIOR SECRETARY LUJAN HELPS LAUNCH
NEW EDUCATION EFFORT ON PROTECTED WILDLIFE**

Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan today helped kick off a special education campaign to acquaint young people with protected wildlife and how illegal trade in these species threatens them with extinction.

The cooperative effort, sponsored by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and "Take Pride in America," and several private entities, involves the loan of suitcases filled with confiscated wildlife products to zoos for use in their education programs and in local schools.

Dubbed "Suitcase for Survival," the program is supported by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the World Wildlife Fund, "Take Pride in America," and the Fish and Wildlife Service. American Tourister, Inc., donated 40 large suitcases to hold the materials.

In announcing the new effort, Lujan said, "The Fish and Wildlife Service has storage rooms and warehouses across the country filled with confiscated illegal wildlife products. It is hoped that by putting a representative sample of these goods on

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the road and into the classroom, we will help students appreciate wildlife laws and how trade in certain wildlife products may lead to extinction of a species."

The 40 suitcases to be shipped to the zoos will contain wildlife products such as stuffed sea turtles; carvings made from elephant ivory; leather goods made from the hides of snakes, crocodiles and lizards; as well as a startling array of tourist souvenirs fashioned from wildlife parts. Also included in the package will be an assortment of background materials, slides and other information for use in the classroom.

Initially, a dozen kits will be sent to major zoos across the country in early 1991. The ultimate aim of the program is to get these materials into the hands of teachers who will be specifically trained by the participating zoos to use the kits in the local school system.